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USSR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

As noted in the final resolutions of the meeting, the anti-popular regimes in Latin America remain in power only due to repressions, economic and military backing of the United States. It is the duty of all honest people to strengthen solidarity with the courageous struggle waged by the Latin American patriots in defence of their rights, for the social and economic emancipation of the peoples.

It is precisely due to the priceless fraternal assistance, rendered to Cuba by the USSR and other states of the socialist community, the documents say, that the young republic was able to hold out in the difficult struggle with imperialism, has achieved tremendous successes in the economic and social sphere. Today, in its turn, Cuba is manifesting international proletarian solidarity with the peoples that are fighting against exploitation and enslavement.

The Latin American journalists condemned strongly the ceaseless provocations of the PRC ruling clique against the heroic Vietnam, whose people had achieved victory over imperialism and colonialism, [and] are now confidently building socialism.

The resolutions of the seminar condemn also the intentions of the Peking leaders to thwart the process of detente in the world, to provoke international conflicts in different areas of the globe. In this criminal policy, the documents of the meeting point out, the ruling clique of the People's Republic of China is actually aligned with the most reactionary forces of international imperialism.

CUBAN PRESS HAILS ROLE OF SOVIET MARITIME FLEET

*Cuba - Michael
8/18*

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[Text] Havana, August 18, TASS--Over sixty per cent of cargoes, exclusive of oil and oil products, delivered to Cuba in the first six months of this year for different branches of the national economy were carried by the ships of the Soviet Merchant Marine.

Soviet vessels are today the most frequent guests at Cuban seaports. To use Leonid Brezhnev's phrase, a strong, wide and dependable bridge has been thrown across the boundless oceanic expanses between the two countries. Going to Cuba over this bridge are machine tools and other industrial equipment, agricultural machinery and various consumer goods. On their way home the Soviet vessels carry in their holds sugar, nickel concentrate, citrus fruit and other Cuban export goods.

The local press highly assesses the Soviet Union's successes in building and strengthening its Merchant Marine and the importance of Soviet friendly assistance to the Cuban people. The Merchant Marine of the USSR, writes the newspaper GRANMA, though very young, is one of the biggest and most efficient in the world. It has up-to-date ships. Translating into life the principles of solidarity and proletarian internationalism, the fraternal socialist state supplies Cuba with all the necessary things for its all-round development.

BREZHNEV EXCHANGES MESSAGES WITH ECUADOREAN PRESIDENT

LD221453Y Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 18 Aug 78 p 2 LD

[Text] Comrade L.I. Brezhnev has sent the President of the Supreme Council of Government of the Republic of Ecuador, Vice-Admiral Alfredo Poveda Burbano, a telegram conveying congratulations and good wishes to the friendly people of Ecuador on the occasion of the country's national holiday--independence day.

In a reply telegram A. Poveda Burbano expressed gratitude for the congratulations and for his part conveyed to the Soviet people wishes for their prosperity.

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U S S R N A T I O N A L A F F A I R S
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

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RATIONALIZATION OF TRANSPORT IN WEST SIBERIA URGED

LD220937Y Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 14 Aug 78 p 2 LD

[Correspondent V. Kiryasov article: "The Fleet and Flotillas"]

[Text] The Ob-Irtysh River basin--In the current year workers in West Siberia's oil and natural gas industry will extract almost 250 million tons of oil and gas condensate and 100 billion cubic meters of natural gas. By the end of the 5-year plan they are to reach 310-315 million tons of "black" and 125-155 billion cubic meters of "blue gold." One of the factors that will determine the success of this program is the efficient operation of the region's main transport--the river fleet. The zone is served by the Irtysh and West Siberian steamship lines. But the water transport workers are not yet fully satisfying the freight requirements of oil and gas industry workers, construction workers and geologists.

At the same time, the river transport workers can scarcely agree with the complaints made against them, as they are working in accordance with plan targets and these are set according to the resources of the steamship lines. Thus, on the one hand, the workers are sharply increasing transport requirements. On the other hand, there is a distinct lag on the part of all freight shipments here. How is this contradiction being resolved and how should it be resolved?

One way is to improve the management structure of river transport in the Ob-Irtysh basin.

At the 25th CPSU Congress it was stated: "In West Siberia there are four departmental river fleets fulfilling virtually the same task.... In Moscow they all come under the supervision of a good dozen ministries and departments. As you can see, they receive plenty of attention. But there are plenty of shortcomings too. Being scattered and poorly concentrated leads to unjustified expenses and losses and slows down the solution of major tasks."

In 1975 ships of the two abovementioned steamship lines of the RSFSR Ministry of the River Fleet were operating here. In addition, there were the upper Irtysh steamship line of the Kazakh SSR's Main River Fleet Administration plus more than fifty "flotillas" of various ministries and departments.

Practice suggests that within a single river system we should have one supreme authority. Disunity among fleets and a lack of efficient cooperation and coordination between them results in considerable losses for the state. For example, in the Irtysh steamship line the prime cost of freight shipments is 75 percent lower and labor productivity 60 percent higher than is the case with Kazakh SSR's Main River Fleet Administration carry gravel and sand downriver to Surgut and Nizhnevartovsk, where they take on timber. But Omsk vessels load up with gravel there for Omsk, and deliver timber to Pavlodar, where they fill the holds with gravel. Such failures to coordinate, cross-hauls and totally unnecessary transshipments would not, of course, occur under one supreme authority.

The departmental fleet operates particularly unproductively. Only in the Irtysh steamship line does it number more than 1500 "floating units." Here it has its own port facilities and repair services. [paragraph continues]